

A

REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Saturday, May 1. 1708.

I Cannot but observe, that there have been not long since two large Contributions made in the World, that have occasion'd some Discourse, and a great many ill-natur'd People are apt to suggest, they are for the same Purposes, I am very well satisfy'd some of it is for the same People.

First, The Pope's large Contribution of a Million of Crowns towards the French Expedition for Scotland.

Secondly, The Charity-Contribution rais'd in England for Relief of the persecuted Clergy in Scotland.

I will not say, that the Proposal of such a Collection was with a Design to raise a Fund for the late famous Expedition, far less will I suggest, that the well-meaning People, who have so generously contributed to the Cause, under the Appearance of Charity to distress'd Families, have had the least evil Intent— But this I must say, they have had the ill Luck to have that Affair be very unhappily tim'd, and the very Juncture in which it happen'd, if there were really noother Circumstance, yet gives Ground, and that indeed too much

much, for the Reflections that are every Day rais'd upon that Business.

And that I may so far justify the Suspensions, as to make them rational in the Persons who raise them, I shall only tell you the Reasons they give for them, which are such as these;

1. The Persons, who this Money was pretended to be rais'd for, are generally speaking profess'd and declar'd Enemies to the Government, avow'd *Jacobites*, and suffer purely for not taking the Oaths.
2. The Persons principally promoting this Collection, and who were most zealous in carrying it on, were those we call *High-Flyers*, the same thing in Essence with a *Jacobite*, only much worse, as they are hypocritically mask'd under the Disguise of Oaths, which they vilely make a Covering to their Principles, while they discover them again in their Actions—
For by their Works you shall know them.
3. The Juncture of Time, when this Collection was begun, was just then, when the very Persons, who were pretended to be reliev'd by this Charity, were inviting over and soliciting a *French and Popish* Invader to depose our QUEEN, overturn our Liberties, suppress the Protestant Religion, dissolve the Union, and invert the Succession.

Now, if this be not sufficient Ground for us to suspect the true Disposition of

these Collections, let them tell us, wherein our Breach of Charity consists; for upon my Word I cannot discern it; and I cannot think it is unseasonable Advice to these Gentlemen, whether they please to take it or no, That they would clear up the Reputation of this Collection from some of its doubtful Circumstances; this they may easily do—if they would vouchsafe for their own Sakes, but to acquaint the World in some publick Manner with some Particulars like these.

1. From whose Solicitation this Charity first began.
2. How much Money they have collected.
3. What Sort of People have had the Disposing of it.
4. How it has been disposed.

In doing this, they would clear up Abundance of Doubts and Scruples, which a great many honest People have entertain'd about this Charity; as particularly, they would in the first Head satisfy them, that it had not its Rise on the same Basis with the *Dunkirk* Expedition, and did not begin hand in hand with the Pope; that while *France* engaged the Pontiff, and the Head of Popery was solicited to relieve them, the Party by this Trick might engage the Protestants of the Church of *England* to be ignorantly contributing to their own Destruction.

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At least if it began among those *Scots Israelites*, who were preparing to go out of the House of Bondage, it might seem something a Kin to the *Israelites Women* borrowing the Jewels of the *Egyptian Ladies*, that they might spoil them at parting.

In answering the second Head, they might remove the Jealousies, that proceed from the flying Reports rais'd, I know not how, of the Largeness of the Sum collected, of which some talk very high, as that they have collected above a Hundred Thousand Pounds *Sterling*—— And as that is a Sum which makes a formidable Sound, and looks too big for a Design of a meer Charity; if it be not true, it behoves them to remove the Suspicion by declaring the Sum; which if it appears to be small and inconsiderable, the Suggestion will vanish of Course; whereas the Magnitude of the Sum gives really some Room for People to justify their Censures, knowing there are not Objects of Charity enough pretended to, to make such a Sum reasonable.

In explaining the third Head, they will satisfy a great many doubting, unbelieving Christians, as to the Design of this Charity; for if it has been committed to the Disposal of honest Men, Men in the Interest of the Government, and of known Principles, as to Pretenders, Invaders, the QUEEN, the Succession, &c. many People, I believe, might wave their Dissatisfactions, and come to Temper about it; but if it be in the Disposal of *Jacobites*, *High-Flyers*, and

profess'd Enemies of our Constitution; if it be in the Disposal of such as smil'd and look'd chearful at the News of an Invasion, and are chagrin, melancholly and hypochondriack at the Disappointment; if it should unluckily be made out, that those are the Trustees of the Money, that have already betray'd the Trust of their own Nation, and endeavour'd to sell the Liberties of their Country; upon my Word, Gentlemen, it will go a great Way to justify the worst Suggestions that can have been formed on this Account, and make us believe, That either the Collection was at first ill-design'd, or has been since ill apply'd, or both.

For who can believe, but they who have so plainly discover'd their Zeal for our Enemies, their Desire for the Overthrowing our Liberties, Dethroning our Sovereign, and destroying all that is dear to us, either as *English Men*, or as Christians, would make themselves glad with an Opportunity to do it so much at our own Charge, as this would be.

The fourth Head rightly explain'd would also clear up Abundance of Difficulties of the same Sort—— For I must own this, however all the rest of the Charity be to be defended, That if this Money be given to relieve the Necessities of a People, who are declared Favourers of the Pretender and his Principles, and by Consequence Enemies to the present Government and future Succession— Tho' the Distresses of the Miserable ought always to be consider'd by us, and reliev'd, yet is
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